



Newsletter



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FROM IRAQ : **Note from Battalion** **Commander**

Hello to all of the "On Time Family." I'm so proud of the men and what they have done here. We are lucky, one of enemies is now leaving, the heat. We have made it through temperatures that have reached 135 degrees. We did not have a single soldier in this Battalion become a heat casualty. I owe this great feat to my Junior Leadership watching out for my soldiers. In our plan to hand over the nation back to the Iraqis, we closed one of our Forward Operating bases on the 1st of September. During the ceremony, the Governor of Kirkuk (the city we are based out of) said the following: "I want to thank America for sending their sons to get our country back from the evil Saddam.

We thank you, we know that you miss your families, and we hope you can see them soon". We continue to receive letters from all over the country thanking us for our service. Very inspirational and I'm proud that every letter we receive, we send back a thank you card. This shows this units maturity, professionalism, and elite reputation. We are doing great work with training of the Iraqi Security Forces (The Police, Iraqi National Guard, and Iraqi Border Patrol) by the completed dedication and professionalism of my Battalion NCOs. They are tremendous and have a "no mission to tough, all missions will be complete", attitude. We have taken on additional combat multipliers. These are attachments to the battalion to enhance our capabilities. We have a Q-36 Radar attachment from the National Guard helping out; we have a Civil Affairs Team assigned, and an Intelligence Collection Team. They are a great addition to the "On Time" Battalion and we enjoy their capabilities and camaraderie with our soldiers.

The Rest and Relaxation (R&R) Plan is going great. We will have soldiers taking leave all the way up to the end of November. We will have over 90% of soldiers have the capability to take leave.

I have talked with all the soldiers on their plans to keep their families updated and informed on our reintegration with our families. We have talked about what has to happen if their families went back to the mainland and want to be there when we arrive back on the Island. If you went home to the mainland, and you want your home/apartment ready for your spouse to come home to a home/apartment, we recommend you get back to the Island the first week of December so that you can find a place, get your household goods delivered, and get everything set up before your husband arrives. We are lucky we are the first Brigade back, please take advantage of this. Once 3rd BDE and the Division Headquarters start to come back from Afghanistan, things will get overwhelming.

If you have a spouse who was supposed to PCS during this deployment, you will be the priority, but no-one will PCS prior to June 2005. Once the Division starts to let people PCS it as part of the regular summer movement, rotation will probably take between July through December. It will take time to get soldiers PCSed off the Island. The Division can only release so many soldiers per month.

We do not know our redeployment date yet. As soon I know, and we begin planning, I will be the first to tell the FRG Leaders and the Rear Detachment. A lot of rumors are spreading right now. One rumor that is not true is that we will be home by Christmas. I wish it was, but it's not the truth. Please trust me when I say, as soon as I, as the Battalion Commander know, I will get that information to you. I owe that to you. Thanks for understanding.

Be proud of your Husband's duty here, we are doing things that are making history,

and they are making positive memories that will last a lifetime. Please take care of each other back home. Your husbands need to know you are keeping strong and that you can raise issues with each Battery FRG group. Take Care and God Bless the "On Time Battalion". I am proud and fortunate to be Your Commander. Thanks for all you have done.

LTC Joseph Connell
LTC, FA
Commanding

Note from CSM

Hello once again from Iraq to all the family members and friends back home. Since our last newsletter, we've continued the mission in support of the Brigade. Frequently in the Brigade Update Briefing the battalion is mentioned for our work in the battalion's area of responsibility.

The local intestinal virus visited us once again this month and a few of us were down for a few days. We're all doing well now, but I'm sure it'll visit us again some day. We are continuing to improve our Forward Operating Bases living conditions.

Safety remains our number one priority; that will not change. Before anyone leaves their Forward Operating Bases, we always ensure they are properly equipped and briefed so that we do not put anyone at unnecessary risk while performing their missions.

September promotions are here. Congratulations to the following deserving soldiers on their promotion to the rank indicated: A-BTRY SSG Lemus, Richard; PFC Mckissick, Zackery; B-BTRY SFC Allen, Terry; SSG Brown, Russell; SPC Humphrey, John; SGT Tinoco, Lester; C-BTRY PFC Estrada, Angel; SGT Jordan, Charles.

We held our monthly SGT/SSG Promotion Board on 04 September. SPC Foxworth, Terrance; SPC Monroe, Dustin; SPC Ocasio, Ismael; SPC Trinidad, Angel; and SPC Wegner, Robert were recommended for promotion to Sergeant. SGT Kyreme, Kofi

was recommended for promotion to Staff Sergeant.

The Family Readiness Group continues to do an outstanding job for our families. I encourage you to continue to support one another, use the Rear Detachment Leaders and the Family Readiness Groups if they can be of assistance. Rest assured that the "On Time" Soldiers will continue to perform well. Thank you all for your continued support of us.

Joe K. Zanders
CSM, USA
BN Command Sergeant Major

"HAWGS"

Dear Families and friends of the HAWGS,

Let us first start off with a tremendous thank you from all the soldiers in the Battalion to Mrs. Anisha Donegan. Anisha, you are truly the anchor that keeps us from drifting away.

A simple thank you is all we have to offer for now, however; the unwavering support you are providing will be remembered for years to come.

Another month has passed that brings us closer to our loved ones. Soldiers are hanging tough! All of us here continue to do our best each day as we strive to spread democracy throughout the country of Iraq.

The progress we are achieving is quite noticeable to the Iraqi people. The 700 kilometers of Iraq / Iranian border in our sector has had a significant decrease of inter-border illegal activity purely due to our vigilance of our three Border Police teams. The 892 soldiers of the newly established Iraqi National Guard (ING) battalion are benefiting from our expertise and assistance since we were given the mission last February. Our soldiers have transformed this ING battalion into a functional unit that is well on their way to accomplishing their own tasks. Currently, our soldiers are developing plans to build a Police and Border Patrol Academy. The architecture of these academies is developed purely from our soldier's imagination and institutional knowledge of what we know that works. It makes us proud to see some of our junior leaders stepping up and developing plans

that will guide the Iraqi security forces to being self- reliant.

The soldiers from Team LOG-PAC are always a welcome sight when they show up at our FOB's. SSG Baldwin and his crew provide mail, food and spare parts to keep us operational. Their efforts do not go unrecognized as they spend countless hours loading their trucks and driving on the roads delivering our needed supplies.

Our Battalion Reenlistment NCO, SSG Doctor is doing a fantastic job retaining the Army's most precious asset, soldiers. Soldiers have been taking advantage of the STRYKER reenlistment opportunities to stay in Hawaii and receive a bonus up to \$10,000. SSG Bejar, SGT Bonds, SGT Whitmer, SGT Neher and SPC Barstow have just recently reenlisted to stay on with our team.

Congratulations to our soldiers to have recently gotten promoted and are excelling in their chosen professions: SSG Bejar, SGT Gonzalez, SGT Semyonov, SGT Christiansen and SGT Neher. SGT Kyreme, SPC Foxworth, SPC Trinidad, SPC Ocasio and SPC Wagner have proven themselves in the areas of job performance, leadership and have passed the promotion board proving that they have what it takes to perform at the next higher rank.

To all the Families, Friends and Soldiers in HHS/2-11 Field Artillery, keep up the phenomenal support for our loved ones and thank you for all of your hard work that will make our mission a huge success. Job Well Done!

HAWGS!

CPT Scott Greenblatt and 1SG David Kucic

"Gator's"

As we approach the month of September the soldiers continue to stay focused on basic soldier skills. We have conducted several M16 and crew served ranges in order to remain sharp on our weapon marksmanship skills. The soldiers conducted several training events this

month. The "Gator" gave classes on IEDs and NCOPD on battle drills. As most of you should already know the mission in Najaf last month was a big success for the battery. Even though the month of September hasn't been as exciting as August we remain upbeat and prepared to deploy anywhere in Iraq in support of IID mission. Here on the airbase it has been relatively quiet since our return from down south. We have several events planned for the soldiers over the next month that will keep them focused on the mission and provide them with recreation as well. Keep the letters coming to your love ones. We are headed into the fourth quarter of this deployment. So keep your spirits up and God bless you all.

GATOR FOR LIFE

CPT CELESTER THOMAS

Commanding



"Bulldog's"



Family and Friends:

August has come and gone and so hopefully has the oppressive heat. It seemed as if August flew past as the Bulldogs of 2d Battalion, 11th Field Artillery continued to be quite busy. Bulldog Forward Observers (FIST,) began the month by taking on an impressive and new challenge. They openly challenged one of the local Iraqi National Guard units to a friendly game of Soccer. Unfortunately for the unsuspecting ING soldiers, the observers were stacked with a good team and beat the Iraqis 4-2. The Iraqi team wanted a rematch, and what developed is an interesting physical training schedule where our guys conduct Multinational Physical Training sessions. They alternate from Soccer some days to normal Army style PT. This is a great experience for our young soldiers like SPCs Mhoon, Gaither, Pharr and others, who are getting valuable leadership opportunities here.

The firing platoons continued to train and remain ever ready to support our Infantry comrades if needed. The Platoon at McHenry continued to fire numerous accurate and timely counter fire missions against Anti-Iraqi Force's rocket and mortar positions. The Platoon at Gaines Mill continued to fire mostly training missions. They continued to press on with difficult and challenging artillery missions. This included firing our long- range projectiles out to 14-15 miles away. Both Platoons ended the month by qualifying on their assigned rifles. At the end of August the Bulldogs were definitely trained and ready for any mission.

One of the more interesting highlights of the month is when we hosted a team from the brigade that will be replacing us next year. We were able to show their commander all there is to know about our

two bases. The commander's team that arrived was able to talk with soldiers of every rank and listen to their ideas and thoughts on our bases. From living areas, to medical stations, to MWR Computers and internet, our future replacements left Iraq with a viewpoint that will help make them even more successful when they arrive sometime next year.

Promoting three fine soldiers to the next rank highlighted the final week of the month. Specialist Tinoco, a canon gunner for fifth section was promoted to the rank of Sergeant, the first and most critical Non-commissioned Officer rank. Second was Sergeant Brown. Sergeant Brown serves as Fire Direction NCO in one of the platoon Fire Direction Centers. His hard work and great determination made it easy for us to promote him to the rank of Staff Sergeant. Finally, Staff Sergeant Allen was promoted to Sergeant First Class. SFC Allen serves as our Gunnery Sergeant, and does an awesome job. Due to the fact that we are split up between two bases he also has served as Howitzer Platoon Sergeant and as the First Sergeant's representative. All three of these fine NCOs have worked very hard over here and have earned every piece and cent of their promotion, Great Job! At the end of July, I said I could not believe the number of people we have been able to send on leave. I had no idea what was coming in August, as we were able to send an additional 20% out on leave. This has been a great program for our soldiers. I am amazed at the stories of the men when they return; a few cases where someone gave up their first class seats, From ATLANTA TO HONOLULU, for one of our guys. Stories of men seeing their newborn children for the first time always leaves a warm spot in my heart. Stories of old friends, and family gatherings. Countless meals paid for by total strangers at local and airport restaurants. And to me the most amazing story of all, when they come back they almost all say, "Sir, it was awesome. I had a great time, but I am glad to be back with the guys." And it is not because they do not miss their families or wives or friends, but because they missed the camaraderie of the team over here. At the end of August we were at just below 70% of the guys having had the chance to return. I don't think we will get those numbers in September, but we are looking good to get most of the guys on leave soon.

Thank you for supporting your Bulldog Soldier, every ounce of support is appreciated by us all!

Bulldogs!,

CPT Brad Culligan
Bulldog 6
1SG Ron Matzen
Bulldog 7

“Cougar’s”

The Cougars are doing exceptionally well. We are living and working in two primary locations. Most of the battery is located in Dibis, a city to the northwest of Kirkuk. The fire support platoon recently moved back to Kirkuk with the Golden Dragons. The supply section is also located in Kirkuk where they work with the logistics team to help keep us ready for any mission. A portion of the firing platoon also lives in Kirkuk and works in the city of Altun Kapri. The Cougars in Dibis and Altun Kapri have been busy using the skills of a motorized infantry unit.

The Cougars are doing great things. In Dibis, the battery is trying to improve public health by building a sanitary slaughterhouse and a rural clinic. A clinic is also under construction in Altun Kapri. Joint Coordination Centers for monitoring and directing operations of the Police and Iraqi National Guard are under construction in both Dibis and Altun Kapri. The Cougars continue to train the police and Iraqi National Guard. In Altun Kapri, the Cougars are overseeing the construction of an Iraqi National Guard facility. The Cougars coach a softball team in Altun Kapri as well. On September 1, 2004, Forward Operating Base Altun Kapri was returned to the Iraqi people in a very nice ceremony attended by the Governor of Kirkuk. Most of the soldiers moved to Dibis while a few moved to Kirkuk. Having most of the battery back together has been great. To celebrate, the Cougars spent Labor Day by having a sports day, swimming, and enjoying a super supper. The soldiers in Dibis designed a new Forward Operating Base Dibis t-shirt and started wearing it on Labor Day. The battery has recently assisted the police and Iraqi National Guard in a highly successful village size cordon and search operation. The

Cougars also assisted the Republic of Korea Army with their movement into their new area of operations. Force protection construction has included new guard towers and a more fortified entrance making Dibis safer than ever for the soldiers. Quality of life improvements at the patrol base include a new gymnasium, a maintenance shop, additional housing, and a running track. Additional sinks and latrines are under construction.

The Fire Support Platoon has been working extremely hard. They have returned from their successful mission in Nejaf. They have recently had the opportunity to send most of their soldiers on leave to make up for the period when the Golden Dragons were on a peak mission cycle. Right of the Line!

All of the soldiers in the battery benefited from the kind donations of Operation Air Conditioner, a non-profit organization dedicated to making life in Iraq better for deployed service members. Mrs. Frankie Mayo, President of Operation AC, sent more than 15 pallets of goodies to the soldiers. These care packages included enough air conditioners for the entire battery, ice makers, boots for every soldier, tools, pressure washers, and morale, welfare, and recreation gear. The MWR equipment included basketball goals, volleyball kits, bats, gloves, movies, a television, sun canopies, beanbag furniture, and video game systems and games. If you care to send a thank you note to Mrs. Frankie Mayo, her address is Operation AC, 43 Decidedly Lane, Bear, Delaware 19701. Another battery sponsor is Mrs. Joannie Parr of the West Point Society of Greater Houston. Since we arrived in Iraq, she has kept us stocked in snacks, fresh socks, books, disposable cameras, hygiene products, holiday decorations, and supplies like soccer balls and candy for the children in the villages we patrol. Her organization has sent the soldiers more than 125 boxes. Letters of appreciation can be sent to her through the office of Thomas J. Parr, M.D., 10490 Southwest Freeway # 130, Sugar Land, Texas 77478.

The Cougars welcomed three new soldiers, Privates Moore, Snook, and Okpagu. Newly promoted soldiers in August and September included SGT Kinere, SGT Jordan, SPC Barnhill, SPC Davidson, SPC Goforth, SPC Vandercook, SPC Cameron, PFC Estrada,

and PV2 Yawney. SGT Lowrey and CPL Fields are now promotable. SPC Marshall won the Battalion Soldier of the Month Board for August 2004. SPC Castaneda, SPC Marshall, and SPC Robinson reenlisted. Every vehicle operator in the battery was awarded the Driver's Badge. 1LT Suhr moved from the Executive Officer position to become a Company Fire Support Officer with A Battery and 1-21 Infantry. 1LT Elzer has assumed the position of Executive Officer. 1LT Reed has moved from the fire support platoon to become the Battery Fire Direction Officer.

It looks like almost every soldier who deployed to Iraq before May 2004 will have the opportunity to take 14 days of leave in the United States. We miss everybody at home very much. We are looking forward to singing Aloha 'Oi to Iraq and returning to our Ohana. Please don't hesitate to contact me for any reason at Whitney.Campbell@us.army.mil. Cougar Pride!

FAD:

Eyes of Thunder!

Although we are beginning to talk about redeployment and making arrangements to move all of our people and equipment safely home, there is still a considerable amount of work to be done. The 25th Field Artillery Detachment continues to maintain 24-hours a day radar coverage of our team's area of operation in the most professional and impressive manner. Although slow at times, the work of our men is invaluable in the overall force protection of American soldiers and important to the intelligence collection process that will eventually eliminate the evil bastards that seek to destroy the awesome progress that has been made in Iraq!

Three of our top NCOs are currently learning the finer points of employing, operating and maintaining the Army's newest indirect fire radar system. SGT Barns, SGT Kelsey and SGT Johnson will spend a couple of days in Baghdad training with the Lightweight Counter Mortar Radar before returning to Kirkuk to teach other leaders from across the Brigade on the capabilities of this system. These men were

selected for their discipline, their intelligence and their incredible motivation to be the best soldiers they can be. I am excited to have these studs representing our team as the subject matter experts on this innovative, field- changing piece of gear.

Although no significant Nuclear, Biological or Chemical threat exists in our area, all of our sections spent some time this week conducting focused training to refresh their skills and ensure that they are always prepared for dangerous situations. This willingness to learn and continually grow as men and soldiers is a real strength of the 25th FAD. The NCOs who lead the training and the soldiers who attentively absorb the necessary knowledge develop important new skills everyday in Iraq.

SGT Easterday reenlisted this week to continue his military career in Hawaii. I am amazed at the sense of duty that motivates men to continue their life of service to the nation. The FAD is far exceeding their reenlistment goals. This is a real tribute to our soldiers!

SGT Sharpe has safely arrived home in Hawaii to spend a much-deserved vacation with his family. SSG Haige and SGT Reagan are also home now for a two week R & R. Have fun! SPC Peguero is preparing for the promotion board. His hard work has proven that he is almost ready to join the NCO Corps. 1SG Ferrell, SPC Barbera and SGT Ford created a new gazebo complete with lights and fans and a picnic table for hosting Domino Tournaments at night. TOP is tough to beat! Additionally, improvements in the gym facilities are being made at FOB Warrior while the men at FOB Gaines' Mill make the most of what they have to stay physically fit and strong. SPC Melton has returned from R & R and is back with his Q-36 Section. The projects that Easy 92 fills their days with constantly improve their site and quality of life. SPC Young is giving some of the basketball regulars a run for their money.

SGT Taylor continues his recovery in Hawaii. These have been difficult months for him since being injured in Iraq, but his selfless focus and determination set a great example for all of us.

Planning is in the works for our redeployment to Hawaii. This will take an

incredible effort and countless hours of work, but the prize will make it worth every bit of sweat. Dates are very flexible, but we are expecting the majority of men to be home about a year from the day they deployed. I will update you as timelines become firmer. Be patient, the end is in sight.

Your prayers and thoughts mean so much to all of us in Iraq. We look forward to our homecoming, but remain focused on successfully accomplishing the mission at hand. I am very proud of our men and the hard work they put into every task.

Respectfully,
CPT Adam Wojcik
25 Field Artillery Detachment Commander



A note from your FRG:

Battalion FRG:

The end is drawing near and our next step will be to get together to start making "Welcome Home" signs and discuss what will be happening. I would love to hear your ideas on this. Please e-mail me at jmconnell@verizon.net

I hope you all had a great summer! Thank you to all of those that have volunteered so far during this deployment. You are truly the heart and soul of the Battalion. I would not know what to do without you all.

Thank you

Melissa Connell

HHS:

Congratulations Ladies, we are now into month 8. You ladies are doing a fantastic job in our FRG and many thanks to each and every one of you who are active in the FRG. Your participation in meetings, fundraisers and, etc., has made our FRG a tremendous success. Imagine how proud the soldiers will be when they return and we have met our goals and most importantly to see the sense of family that we have. There are 2 new wives in our Hawg Family, Tanja Busch and Brandy McKim. Welcome to our family and we all are looking forward to working with you guys. I would also like to say a special thank you to a group of ladies that are the backbone to our group. Glenda McEachern, Tammi Greenblatt, Tanya Neil, Jeanie Jackson, Dena Elliott, Armida Bonds, Jen VanEmburg, Yolanda Walton. Thank you for taking on the role as point of contact during this deployment and for doing such a phenomenal job. And to all of the Hawg FRG members, thank you and keep up the great work. Remember TEAM! Together Everyone Achieves More!

Anisha Donegan
HHS FRG Leader
HOOOOAAHHH

What ACS has to offer?

Spouse's Night Out

Every Thursday night from 6:30 PM, all spouses of deployed soldiers are invited. Some of the upcoming events are

Free childcare is available for Blue Star Card holders by calling 655-3929 no later than 12:00 noon on the Tuesday prior to each Thursday night event.

Reservations can be made up to two weeks in advance!

Notes to our Soldiers:

- ♥ SPC VanEmburg--Baby, I love you so much and I am so proud of you. You are my heart and soul. I miss you and can't wait until you are in my arms for good. I love you, Princess.
- ♥ CPT Greenblatt-- Hi Daddy. Please be safe and take care of yourself so you can come home and play with me. I miss you and love you lots. Love, Jordan
- ♥ CPT Mungie--I am doing well in school and karate. I'm being good for Mommy. I love you and miss you tons. Love, Joshua
- ♥ CPT Mungie--I love you and I miss you. That's it. Love your bestest sweetheart, Olivia
- ♥ CPT Mungie--I love you, Babe! You're doing an awesome job! We are so proud of you. God Bless you. All my love, Nicole
- ♥ CPT Haught--We are so proud of you! We miss you a ton but are getting excited that we are almost through the deployment! Way to go on the Baseball Game! Hugs and Kisses, Tracy, Jackson, Emma
- ♥ SGT Jackson, David--We are almost home. I love you! Keep up the good work. Jeanie
- ♥ SPC Wilson--We love you. Hope you will be home soon. Happy 10th Anniversary Honey. Love, Andre Wilson
- ♥ SSG Farmer--Hey baby remember we love you and miss you dearly. Ja'Sona is so proud of her Daddy. Love you, Mitzi & Ja'Sona Farmer
- ♥ SGT Bonds--Keep your head up, remember that we love you & we miss you. Stay strong for us, because we are doing it for you. Love, The Bonds Squad
- ♥ Hatchett--Be safe, keep God first and everything will be alright. We all love you, miss you and look forward to seeing you soon. Love, Valecia
- ♥ SSG Elliott--Just wanted to let you know that you are always in our prayers. We love you, babe. I can't wait for us to be a family again....it's so close now. Always & forever, Dena
- ♥ SGT Busch--Love ya much! Tonja
- ♥ PVT Turely, Charles--Thinking about you, miss you, and Love you very much! Jackie & Terrence
- ♥ Smoke Donegan--Downhill stretch now baby! I love you always and forever and no matter what. Keep your head up, Baby-- The Mrs.
- ♥ SPC Payne--I want you to know I love you and miss you so much. You'll be back soon enough with everyone. Be good and take care! Love Always, Lauren.